

down to the business of the American people. Please, please join Democrats and Republicans to protect the American people and fund the Department of Homeland Security immediately. Then we can focus on middle class economics, which can create bigger paychecks for all Americans and build new infrastructure, and we can get back to the work of the American people.

#### MAKING PERMANENT THE CONSERVATION EASEMENT TAX INCENTIVE

(Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today because this House has an important job to finish, one that involves providing some certainty for our family farmers and property owners at all income levels. It is the conservation easement legislation, which will make the incentive permanent. It was sponsored in past sessions by over 300 Members of this House and by many Members in the Senate.

The conservation easement incentive has enabled property owners across the country to voluntarily preserve their land. In some cases, the availability of the tax credit means the difference between keeping a family farm or selling it. In my time as township supervisor and as county commissioner in Chester County, one of my top priorities was preserving farmland and natural resources, but it required the collaboration and the financial wherewithal of the landowner. The conservation easement legislation that we seek to make permanent will enable more of that to happen.

Organizations in my district, like the Berks County Conservancy, the Natural Lands Trust, the Brandywine Conservancy, and the French and Pickering Creeks Conservation Trust, have all been very, very helpful in making Berks, Chester, Lebanon, and Montgomery Counties great places to live and raise a family. Families cannot make long-term decisions with short-term extensions about what is probably their most important, valuable assets. So let's finish our job, Mr. Speaker, and commit to making this the year we make permanent the Federal conservation easement tax incentive.

#### STEM GATEWAYS ACT

(Mr. KENNEDY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. Speaker, our country's economic forecast continues to improve, which is a good thing, but we do risk leaving far too many people behind as we come out of a recession. That is an issue for us all.

STEM education—science, technology, engineering, and mathematics—is a critical vehicle in making sure that all Americans have access to

the economic gains that will power our country for the next generation. Over the next 10 years, STEM jobs will grow at normally double the rate of non-STEM jobs, and at all levels of education, STEM careers earn about 11 percent higher wages compared to their counterparts in other jobs.

Mr. Speaker, this is an enormous opportunity, but, to date, our efforts around STEM education have left huge segments of our population behind. Combined, Hispanics and African Americans only occupy about 13 percent of all STEM jobs. While women make up nearly half of the workforce overall, only 26 percent of STEM jobs are held by women. In 2013, there were 11 States in which not a single African American student took a computer science advanced placement test, and there were eight States in which no Hispanic students did and three States in which no women did.

Mr. Speaker, this is a challenge for us all. With this in mind, I rise, along with Representative TONKO and Senator GILLIBRAND, to introduce the STEM Gateways Act, which will try to make sure that access to the jobs of tomorrow is spread to all Americans.

#### OPPORTUNITY ECONOMY

(Ms. FOXX asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, the first month of the 114th Congress has been a busy one as House Republicans have gotten right to work in tackling the difficult issues facing the Nation.

We started off the new year by passing two pieces of bipartisan legislation designed to minimize the consequences caused by ObamaCare. We also approved three bills that will help us on our way to energy independence and that will increase access to affordable North American oil. The House acted swiftly to defund in their entirety the President's executive actions on illegal aliens, and we passed legislation that would ensure that veterans who may be struggling will have access to the mental health care services and support they need.

While House Republicans have accomplished a great deal in a relatively short time, there is still much work to do. We are focused on growing our economy from the ground up, not from the top down, to help get people back to work and restore opportunity for everyone.

#### DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY FUNDING

(Mr. CICILLINE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Speaker, every single day, our national security personnel work tirelessly to protect Americans from harm. At a time of renewed threats from ISIS around the world and with the recent attacks in France,

these men and women have done the tremendous job of keeping our country safe; but unless Congress acts in 17 days, the Department of Homeland Security will run out of funding.

Homeland Security Secretary Jeh Johnson has warned that 30,000 Homeland Security workers will be furloughed, and the rest will be forced to work without pay. Is this really how our government should treat its employees on the front line of our national security system?

In an effort to roll back President Obama's executive action on immigration, House Republicans have attached toxic policy riders to their Department of Homeland Security bill. The Republican-controlled Senate has rejected this bill three times, but rather than taking up clean legislation to provide our frontline personnel with the resources they need to protect our country, they instead are attaching all of these toxic riders.

House Republicans continue to play political games with our national security. I call on my colleagues on the other side of the aisle to stop putting politics ahead of the safety of American families and fund the Department of Homeland Security immediately.

#### DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY FUNDING

(Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, a million jobs were created in the last 3 months; the deficit is down, and the stock market is up; but instead of building on this progress, the Republican Party is again threatening a partial government shutdown. This time, it is the Department of Homeland Security. We don't have many days left.

Why? Because the anti-immigrant fringe of the majority party disagrees with the President's decision to address our broken immigration system. If they don't get their way, they would stop paying our Border Patrol agents, stop paying our TSA security screeners at airports, stop paying the Coast Guard and Secret Service. The men and women who work to keep us secure would have to worry about how they would feed their families instead of protecting our country.

This is dangerous to our security and to our economy. I urge my colleagues to let common sense prevail and pass a clean Department of Homeland Security bill. The American people deserve their security.

#### COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives: